

PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION
FOR COASTAL WETLANDS PERMIT
AND WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) has filed an application requesting permission to conduct regulated activities under the provision of the Coastal Wetlands Protection Act, Title 49, Chapter 27, Mississippi Code of 1972.

The applicant is proposing to expand an off-bottom oyster aquaculture lease site in the Mississippi Sound south of Deer Island, Biloxi, Harrison County, Mississippi. The dimensions of the proposed site are approximately 11,151 feet in length; 1,050 feet in width; totaling 245 acres with the northern boundary of the project approximately 1,200 feet from the southern shoreline of Deer Island. The proposed site will have buffer zones and lanes to allow for ingress and egress through the site. MDMR intends to sub-divide the project area into 1 to 20-acre sections and sublease to parties interested in pursuing an off-bottom oyster aquaculture venture.

Two methods of oyster aquaculture will be utilized: the suspended basket or longline system and floating basket system. Each individual lease holder will be allowed to determine which off-bottom aquaculture method(s) they would prefer to utilize. No more than 40 wooden pilings, each up to 8 inches in diameter, may be placed per acre. In addition, no more than 1,200, 2-inch diameter pvc pipes may be placed per acre for leased areas utilizing the suspended basket/longline method of oyster culture. The height of the wooden pilings used at the site will be limited to 4 feet above mean high water and pvc pipes will be limited to 2.5 feet above mean high water and be grey in color to reduce visibility. MDMR is requesting a change to the Coastal Wetlands Use Plan from a General Use (G) classification to a Special Use (S2) – Leased wetlands for oyster cultivation and a Special Use (S3) – Leased wetlands by the State for other purposes-in this case: off bottom oyster cultivation. This public notice and project diagrams may be accessed using the link below:

<http://www.dmr.ms.gov>

Due to Covid-19 restrictions with regards to public gathering, comments may be submitted for the record in writing or in person to Greg Christodoulou between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. on January 26 in the Bolton Building Lobby located at 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530. Persons wishing to attend shall enter the building one at a time and should wear a mask. In person comments will be limited to 3 minutes and be recorded. Please be advised that this will not be a question and answer session but will be a medium for concerned parties to make comments about the proposed project for the public record.

In compliance with Section 401 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251, 1341), as amended by PL 95-217, the applicant will request certification from the Office of Pollution Control that the above-mentioned activity will be in compliance with applicable provisions of Section 301 (33 U.S.C. 1311), Section 302 (33 U.S.C. 1312), Section 303 (U.S.C. 1313), Section 306 (U.S.C. 1316), and Section 307 (U.S.C. 1317) of the Act and appropriate requirements of the State Law.

Any person wishing to make comments or objections to the proposed regulated activity must submit those comments in writing to the Department of Marine Resources at 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530 before 1:00 p.m. on the day January 29, 2021.

PLEASE PUBLISH:
January 10, 2021
January 17, 2021
January 24, 2021

Please Furnish Proof.